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Democratic Transition and the Evolution of Mass Politics in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract: The comparative sociology of elections has been a central focus in the study of mass political behavior. Of special concern to pioneers such as Stein Rokkan have been comparative generalizations regarding the genesis and nature of political conflicts and cleavages, and the structuring of mass politics around the poles of government and opposition. The principal task of this analysis is to examine the recent electoral experience of two post-communist states - Poland and Romania - as they confront the transition toward democratic rule. Both states have had a variety of significant electoral consultations which enable us to identify patterns of stability or change in aggregate voter alignments. Our approach at this stage has been to employ ecological data to draw out inferences about emergent patterns of electoral alignments as they relate to government and opposition in these two societies. The findings suggest elements of both continuity and change. While some groups from the pre-Communist period experienced a political revival and secured electoral niches, the collapse of the Communist order has given rise to new lines of cleavage not evident in the pre-Communist period. The First democratic elections appeared to have been defining events in that they exposed long-standing ethnic, nationalist and regional cleavages which were suppressed by the Communist regime. Regional disparities in economic development also gained political salience and became a major factor in voting patterns. The articulation of these issues was greatly assisted by proportional electoral laws. The evidence suggests an early "freezing" of partisan differences which have begun to take shape around distinct bases of support in each society.

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Introduction

The comparative sociology of elections and electoral behavior has long been a central focus in the study of mass political behavior (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967b, pp. 1-64). The decade of the late 1960's and early 1970's was especially fruitful from a theoretical vantage point as insightful scholars such as Stein Rokkan and others offered a number of innovative frameworks and schema for the comparison of party systems and electoral alignments in the context of national political development (Allardt and Littunen, 1964; Allardt and Rokkan, 1970; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967a; Rokkan, 1970). Of special concern to these scholars were comparative generalizations regarding the genesis and nature of political conflicts and cleavages in the structuring of mass politics in the liberal democracies of Europe.

Europe constituted the prime database for analysis because of early extensions of the franchise, significant party development, and a long tradition of representative government. In addition, scholars also sought to enrich this empirical base by extending their research beyond the major polities of continental Europe and the Anglo-American systems to include the developmental experiences of the smaller democracies, many of which had been ignored in previous comparative studies.

Despite important theoretical advancements and a broadening of the database, significant gaps remain in our knowledge of the developmental experience of Europe at large, especially those political systems located an the central and eastern peripheries. As long as these states remained under what was perceived to be an hegemonic Communist political order, they were generally overlooked by comparativists, or considered to be beyond the range of contemporary analysis, even though most had functioned under pluralistic or quasi-pluralistic conditions in the pre-World War 11 era (McHale, 1986; Roucek, 1946). In fact, in some systems (e.g., Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland), the Communist regime did permit a type of limited or controlled pluralism which tended to preserve the political identities of selected older parties and interest groups. Most, however, functioned in a weakened state since strict quotas were established in terms of the upper limits of political representation (see McHale and Skowronski, 1983).

The sudden, and, indeed, unexpected collapse of the Communist order has raised several analytical questions about political development in central and eastern Europe as the former Communist states confront the tradttion toward democratic rule. How much continuity exists in mass political alignments from the pre-Communist period? What appear to be the major cleavage lines in evidence following the First free elections in over forty years? (Berglund and Dellenbrant, 1994). What types of parties and party systems have been formed? (Kitschelt, 1992). What is the emergent basis of government and opposition?

Major political transitions such as we are witnessing in eastern and central Europe are very often accompanied by unanticipated consequences and surprises. The survival and transformation of Communist parties is a case in point. In the wake of strong anti-Communist sentiment that had swept across Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s, most observers mistakenly thought the former ruling Communist parties would play little or no role in the post-Communist political order, and that any association with the former Communist regime would be a political liability. In hindsight we see the fallacy in this perspective. First, having functioned as the ruling party for decades, Communist parties were much better organized than other indigenous political groups, and had provided the only real channels for coopting and training cadres in political and administrative skills. Second, although some efforts were made to preserve pre-Communist political formations and opposition groups, most had few political resources, some had been in exile, and virtually all had untested mass electoral bases. The noncommunist parties generally had a low level of political identification among their respective mass publics. Liberal parties, for example, many of which had pre-Communist roots, nourished high expectations for a central role in the post-Communist era, but found they had great difficulty moving beyond their narrow urban bases of support in countries with a large conservative peasantry such as Bulgaria, Poland and Romania.

While other groups from the pre-Communist period such as the various peasant-based parties and nationalist groups did experience a political revival and secure electoral niches, the collapse of the Communist order actually gave impetus to new lines of cleavage that were not evident in the pre-Communist period. Juan Linz's observations an the political transformation of the Mediterranean from dictatorship to democracy in the 1970s suggested that the shape of the future party system depends not only an the continuity of old cleavages, but is also heavily influenced by the conditions prevailing during the transition period including the electoral system (Linz, 1967, p. 274). For example, the differential effects of economic reform across regions and classes introduced a new element of political conflict between perceived beneficiaries and potential losers in the new order. This conflict was apparent in the economic insecurity of the rural areas and older industrial regions, as well as the older age cohorts who tended to support or identify with the social and economic policies of the previous Communist regime.

The First democratic elections also exposed deep-seated ethnic and regional cleavages which had simmered for years but were suppressed by the Communist regimes. Regional disparity in economic development - a source of protest and opposition politics in other European systems - suddenly gained political salience and appears to have become a major factor in voting patterns (McHale and Shaber, 1977; Rokkan and Urwin, 1982). Ethnic tensions found an effective outlet in both ethnic and nationalist parties which were greatly assisted by proportional electoral laws. Many of the new issues were

not just economic or class-based, but included socioreligious differences and environmental concerns which by the late 1980s had achieved an established place on the European political agenda.

The principal task of this analysis is to relate the recent electoral experience of these transformed states to the Body of existing literature dealing with the comparative sociology of European mass politics. A comprehensive analysis of central and eastern Europe is beyond the scope of a single article. Instead we will focus our attention an the post-Communist electoral experiences of two representative systems - Romania and Poland. Both states have had a variety of significant electoral consultations which enable us to identify and describe emergent patterns in aggregate voter alignments. Both systems also represent marked differences in political traditions. In Poland, aspects of a pluralist polity survived the Communist onslaught, whereas democratic institutions were almost nonexistent in recent Romanian history.

The Lipset-Rokkan schema provides us with a useful analytical framework for structuring our inquiry into the initial stages of competitive politics in eastern Europe (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967b, pp 1-64). Among the major questions raised by Lipset and Rokkan for comparative analysis are these concerning the genesis of conflicts, cleavages, and oppositions within the national community, as well as the bases of current electoral alignments when viewed against historically given alternatives. Lipset and Rokkan also postulate that the history of electoral politics and party development involves a sequence of successive changes around two major cross-cutting dimensions: territorial and functional.

We can only address the most basic of these questions at this point given the brevity of the democratic experience and the lack of longitudinal information an electoral choice. Recent electoral outcomes represent our primary data. Our approach will be to examine the geography of the vote in Poland and Romania, and then assess its coincidence with other politically salient, geographically distributed characteristics of a social and economic nature. We see this as the first stage in a more comprehensive analysis. We are aware of the limitations and perils of over-reliance an aggregate ecological data; and while some reliable polling has taken place, we eagerly await the accumulation of a more extensive body of comparable survey data for hypothesis-testing and micro-level analysis. Political cleavages - both territorial and functional - take an added meaning when viewed in a regional context. Our modest goal in this article is to employ electoral data to draw out inferences about emergent patterns of electoral alignments in these two societies.

Romania

Romania's transition to democraty represented a sharp break from the Communist past wich little preparation for the transition to a democratic order. A violent popular uprising ended the Communist regime in Romania in December 1989. Ion Iliescu, a party official in the previous regime and president of the newly-formed National Salvation Front (FSN), won a landslide electoral victory with his party in the presidential and legislative races of May 1990. The political intolerance of the previous regime and the abruptness of transition created an organizational vacuum which was immediately flled by the FSN - a "catchall" formation composed of a substantial number of cadre from the former Communist party. Two other presidential candidates contested the 1990 election. Radu Campeanu and Ion Ratiu did poorly, although each came to represent a discrete historical and ideological base in Romanian society.

Several parties in opposition to the FSN also sought representation in the new parliament including the Peasant and Agrarian parties, the National Liberal Party and the ethnic and regionally-based Hungarian Democratic Union. However, the opposition parties largely competed against each other instead of presenting a unified platform to counter the FSN. Politics during the transition period was also complicated by the existence of a small but vocal royalist sentiment in support of deposed and exiled King Michael 1. The former king had been the subject of various political maneuverings by groups including the National Peasants who advocated a restoration of the monarchy - although this was not their chief programmatic issue.

A little more than a year after the First democratic elections, Romania hold a nationwide referendum in December 1991 to accept or reject a new constitution designed to replace an interim arrangement which had been in force since the December 1989 revolution. The 1991 referendum was a hastily contrived affair, and the resulting low tumout suggested a confused electorate. The major opposition parties (National Liberal Party and Hungarian Democratic Union) had voted against the new constitution in parliament, but did not call for a boycott of the referendum as did the royalists. The Liberals claimed that the new constitution vested too muck power in the office of the president. The ethnic Hungarians expressed fear that the new constitution would legitimize a resurgent Romanian nationalism. The royalists argued that Romanian people should be consulted an restoration of the monarchy. The referendum was accepted by a vote 76.5 percent for and 21.3 percent against. Turnout was 54 percent (about 8.5 million voting from a potential electorate of 16 million).

The referendum was the second major electoral consultation in Romania since the end of the Communist regime in 1989, and as such provides us with an opportunity to assess patterns of electoral change from the initial legislative and presidential contests of May 1990. It is a good indicator of the emergent

geographical bases of government and opposition in the immediate post-communist period. We will focus on the correlates of the No vote at the judet level.[1]

The distribution of No votes in the 1991 referendum can be viewed as an important indicator of an emerging and coalescing electoral opposition to the ruling FSN. A series of correlations will illustrate this point.[2] As expected, the No vote was strongest in those judete with a high concentration of ethnic Hungarians (r = +.60) who have felt threatened by the growing nationalist sentiment of the current regime. The No vote averaged approximately 37 percent in the ethnic Hungarian areas (compared to 14.6 percent for the non-ethnic Hungarian areas) - ten percentage points over the 21 percent national average.

The most important correlate of the No vote was the distribution of votes for Radu Campeanu, presidential candidate of the National Liberal Party in May 1990. Campeanu's presidential vote had been closely tied to the electoral base of the Hungarian Democratic Union. The correlation between Campeanu's support in 1990 and the No vote in 1991 is extremely high (r = +.98). However, even more important is the observation that in every judet, the magnitude of the No vote exceeded Campeanu's 1990 presidential support by an average of 9.5 percentage points.

The No vote in 1991 appeared to take on the characteristics of a more generalized nationwide opposition to the current regime. While this opposition was founded on the electoral base established by Campeanu in 1990, it now appeared to extend beyond the original ethnic Hungarian core areas of opposition. For example, if we examine the difference between Campeanu's 1990 support and the percent of No votes in each judet, we find that the largest increases in opposition voting were not necessarily in the ethnic Hungarian areas. This difference was uniformly positive across Romania and ranged from 3.6 to 16.1 percentage points. The following non-ethnic Hungarian judete in eastern Romania registered some of the largest increases in opposition voting: Bacau (13.7%), Tulcea (12.9%), Vrancea (11.9%), Prahova (11.9%), and Dimbovita (11.1 %).

Electoral opposition in Romania has cut significantly into the Base of FSN support, and we are not likely to see the overwhelming support (e.g., 80% and above) for the FSN in future electoral contests. The nature of this opposition

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[1] The ecological information for Romania consists of subnational political and socioeconomic data measured at the judet level. Romania is divided into 40 judete plus the municipality of Bucharest and the Illfov agricultural sector. Data sources include Annuarl Statistic al Republici Socialiste Romania (Directia Centrala de Statistica, 1986); Buletin de Informare Publica (Al Comisiei Nationale Pentru Statistica, Nr. 5/1990); Monitorul Oficial al Romaniei (Nr. 81-82/1990); and various issues of the Bucharest newspaper Dimitaeata.

[2] Pearson product moment correlations are reported throughout this article. The correlations vary from ±1.0 - a perfect relationship to 0.0 - no relationship.

appears to be largely cultural and political in nature at this stage, although there are economic overtones in evidence. The key to opposition-building in Romania in future elections is whether the various elements of discontent can coalesce into a unified potent force to challenge the initial parliamentary and presidential supremacy of Iliescu and the National Salvation Front (see Mungiu and Pippidi, 1994, pp. 357-359). In any case, the No vote in 1991 is likely to remain a significant benchmark for regime opposition in future elections in muck the same way as the No vote in post-World War II referenda an constitutional reconstruction in Greece, France, and Italy (see McHale and Paranzino, 1975).

A second round of legislative and presidential elections was held in Romania in September and October 1992. These elections were the third major national consultation in three years, and the first under the new constitution ratified in December 1991. The elections simultaneously renewed both houses of the legislature (Chamber and Senate) and resulted in a run-off ballot for the presidency. Although six candidates entered the race, the two presidential contenders in the run-off were the former Communist leader and incumbent, Ion Iliescu, and a political unknown, Emil Constantinescu, who was supported by a coalition of opposition parties.

The elections of 1992 were more complex than the simple binary nature of the 1990 contests. In this case, there was a clear distinction in voting patterns between the presidential and legislative elections. Several important party developments had occurred prior to the election campaign. In March 1992, the ruling FSN split into right and left factions. The "right" faction led by former prime minister Petre Roman retained the original FSN designation. The breakaway "left" faction was led by incumbent President Iliescu and renamed itself the Democratic National Salvation Front (FDSN). The opposition regrouped into a loose 18 party coalition known as the Democratic Convention of Romania (CRD) and rallied its support around Constantinescu an the run-off ballot. Finally, remnants of the former Communists regrouped as the Socialist Labor Party (PSM).

The elections of 1992 confirmed our previous assessment regarding the probable evolution of electoral opposition in post-Communist Romania. The distribution of the No vote in 1991 suggested the emergence of a more generalized opposition to both the current regime and the FSN/FDSN from that manifested in the First post-Communist elections in 1990. At the time of the 1991 referendum, the electoral opposition had already began to erode the base of FSN support, and we had speculated that overwhelming electoral majorities for the FSN, in whatever guise, or its presidential candidate, would not be repeated.

In Table 1, we have arranged the major electoral results an the basis of averages across all of the judete, and separately for the ethnic and non-ethnic judete. Although Iliescu was elected an the second ballot, the opposition had

Table 1:

ETHNICITY AND THE ROMANIAN VOTE (Averages)

Electoral Variable	Total Judete (N=42)	Ethnic Judete* (N=14)	Non-Ethnic Judete (N=27)
Iliescu, 1990	84.5%	70.4%	92.3%
Iliescu, 1992	62.4	42.2	72.7
FSN, 1990	67.0	46.0	78.0
FDSN (Iliescu), 1990	47.0	33.0	55.0
FSN (Roman), 1992	18.0	18.0	18.0
Campeanu, 1990	11.6	24.8	4.8
Ratiu, 1990	3.5	4.8	2.9
Opposition, 1990	15.1	29.6	7.7
No Vote, 1991	21.0	33.9	14.4
Constantinescu, 1992	37.8	57.6	27.6
CDR, 1992	35.0	48.0	28.0
Opposition Gain,1992**	22.7	28.0	20.0

* Judete with more than 12% ethnic minorities.

** Percentage point difference between Constantinescu's vote in 1992 and the combined vote of Campeanu and Ratiu in 1990.

gained considerable strength since 1990. Iliescu's average presidential vote across the judete in 1990 was 85 percent; in 1992 his support an the second ballot dropped to a modest 63 percent. The average vote for the CDR was 35 percent (compared to 9% and 6% for the Hungarian Democratic Union and National Liberal Party respectively in 1990). With an average vote of 38 percent, Constantinescu's support in 1992 was considerably higher than the combined votes of both Campeanu and Ratiu in 1990. The average gain in votes in 1992 -the percentage point difference between Constantinescu's vote in 1992 and the combined vote of Campeanu and Ratiu in 1990 - was 23 percentage points. Constantinescu's performance is significant considering that he was designated a presidential candidate only two months before the elections, and had spent most of his campaign introducing himself to the electorate.

The emergent electoral opposition in Romania appears to be founded an the geographical and socioeconomic bases First established by Radu Campeanu (Liberal Party presidential candidate) in 1990. It began basically as an urban phenomenon with strong roots in the ethnic minority areas. Campeanu's candidacy had been helped by signifcant support from the Hungarian Democratic Union. In 1992, Iliescu and his faction of the National Salvation Front achieved their best results in the 27 judete where less than 12 percent of

the population was composed of ethnic minorities. Table 1 provides strong evidence that ethnicity is and will remain a potent factor in Romanian voting behavior and in shaping the post-Communist party system.

The ethnic dimension in Romanian electoral politics is not confined to the Hungarian Democratic Union. Of equal importance to opposition-building in Romania has been the rise and continued growth of the nationalist parties such as the Party of Romanian National Unity (PUNR) and the Greater Romania Party (PRM). For these parties, the Romanian ethnic issue is the primary concern. Both parties managed to overcome the 3 percent election threshold imposed for the 1992 election and have significant representation in both the Chamber and the Senate.

Although the nature of electoral opposition in Romania continues to be predominantly cultural and political in nature, socioeconomic and developmental differences across Romania are also becoming increasingly important in differentiating patterns of electoral choice between government and opposition. In some respects, this represents a continuation of historical divisions. Socioeconomic cleavages and the urban-rural dichotomy formed the Basis for the Romanian party system that had emerged in the pre-Communist period (Gilberg, 1983).

An examination of the correlations between the presidential vote in 1992 and key developmental indicators (e.g., urbanization, employment, mortality rates, etc.) provides striking evidence that Romanian politics also reflects a potential cleavage between the developed and underdeveloped regions of the country. These key indicators, along with other variables measuring quality of life, have been aggregated using factor analysis into a single index of development in order to assess its overall effect an the 1992 presidential vote. Our findings are presented in Table 2.

Although the correlations are of modest magnitude overall, they clearly demonstrate that Iliescu's support in 1992 was drawn primarily from the underdeveloped rural areas principally in southeastern Romania. His electoral base was characterized as non-urban, agricultural, with a lower living standard (as measured by higher mortality rates). On the basis of these relationships, one might speculate that Iliescu's support comes principally from the order, more conservative, threatened and deprived sectors of the population, who are more comfortable with continued social and economic guarantees and a slower pace of reform (see Datculescu, 1992, p. 128).

In contrast, electoral support for the opposition candidate was located geographically in the more urbanized areas with higher levels of development and living standards. The city of Bucharest continued to be an important center of opposition support in much the same way as it was in the 1990 presidential election.

When the ethnic factor is removed from the analysis in Table 2, the importance of developmental factors in voting behavior increases dramatically.

Table 2:
SELECTED CORRELATES OF THE ROMANIANPRESIDENTIAL VOTE, 1992 (N = 42 judete)

Variable	Iliescu*		Constantinescu*	
Iliescu, 1990	.92		-.91	
Campeanu, 1990	-.88		.87	
Ratiu, 1990	-.88		.56	
Urban population	-.41	(-.75)**	.42	(.64)**
Rural population	.40	(.72)	-.40	(-.63)
Industrial employment	-.53	(-.44)	.54	(.44)
Agricultural employment	.45	(.72)	-.45	(-.63)
Mortality rate	.48	(.29)	-.50	(-.27)
Development index***	-.48	(-.77)	.48	(.64)

* Second ballot vote.
** Correlations in parentheses are based an the 27 judete having less than 12% ethnic minority populations.In effect, this removes the ethnicity factor from the relationships.
*** Factor score index of development. Positive scores indicate "developed" judete, negative scores indicate "underdevelopment."

The correlations in parentheses are based on the same relationships but restricted to the 27 judete having fewer ethnic minorities in their populations. Once again, the results are not only significant in terms of the magnitude of the correlations (e.g., .70 and above), but striking in terms of their implications for Romanian politics. There is little doubt that in the non-ethnic areas of Romania, the 1992 presidential election could also be construed as a contest between "developed" and "underdeveloped" Romania. The most distinguishing factor in the presidential vote was the development index.

The key factors of ethnicity and development can be combined into a regression model which allows us to account for over two-thirds of the 1992 presidential second ballot. In the following models, development is represented by the development index reported in Table 2, and ethnicity is measured as a binary variable (1 = ethnic judet; 0 = non-ethnic judet):

$$\text{Iliescu (1992)} = 71.5 - 4.9(D) - 28.8(E)$$
$$R=.83 \quad R^2=.68$$

$$\text{Constantinescu (1992)} = 28.8 + 5.1(D) + 26.3(E)$$
$$R=.82 \quad R^2=.67$$

Where:

D = Development Index (factor scores)

E = Ethnicity (binary variable)

The shape of post-Communist politics in Romania continues to evolve with some features more clear than others. As expected, the umbrella-like National Salvation Front has started to disintegrate over ideology and personalities, although it may still be capable of coalescing around an identifiable candidate. The opposition made important gains in 1992, especially in the legislative arena, but it has a long way to go to challenge the dominance of the FSDN/FSN. There is evidence that the opposition has established an electoral base although the parties are still weak organizationally.

Ethnicity clearly remains a divisive territorial issue among the Romanian electorate and represents an important core element of opposition support. Its effect an electoral behavior has been limited to the small number of judete (N = 14) with large ethnically diverse populations, although the nationalist parties have been more inclined to support the government. In contrast, the political implications of developmental differences across Romania are more general in their influence an mass politics, and there is ample evidence to indicate that they are beginning to overshadow the narrow issue of ethnicity. Developmental differences have historical roots, especially in the urban-rural cleavage, and they are expected to play an even greater role in future elections and in shaping the emergent party system of post-Communist Romania.

Poland

The transition to democracy in Poland has been less abrupt and somewhat deeper than in Romania (see Jasiewicz, 1992a). Elements of civil society and a degree of pluralism managed to survive the Communist era. Poland, like Romania, has now experienced three major electoral contests in the post-Communist period: a presidential election in 1990, and legislative elections in 1991 and 1993. The two legislative elections were conducted under very different electoral rules. As a result of extreme fragmentation in the aftermath of the 1991 legislative election, the electoral law was changed to encourage a simplification of the party system in terms of parliamentary representation (see Jasiewicz, 1992c). The results were dramatic. Political representation in the Sejm dropped from 29 parties in 1991 to only 7 in 1993.

Poland's transition to democracy began with a somewhat disorganized electorate, although the battle lines between Solidarity and the Communist regime had been drawn earlier and extended throughout the 1980s. Pre-Communist era parties, such as the various peasant formations managed to retain their identity, and despite the "hegemonic" party system under Communist rule, various other socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious

organizations were permitted a limited political role (Cieplak, 1983; Wiatr, 1970). Partially-free elections in June 1989 resulted in Solidarity capturing all of the seats in the new second chamber of parliament and achieving significant representation in the Sejm (see Jasiewicz, 1992b). While the fully-free presidential election of 1990 marked the end of the Communist order in Poland, it also opened the door to new oppositions unrelated to the Solidarity-Communist cleavage which had dominated Poland for almost a decade (see Jasiewicz, 1992c).

In the transition to democratic rule, the Polish electorate proved to be not all that different from electorates in Western Europe. Given a free choice under liberal electoral rules, all types of conflicts tended to emerge based on politically-salient divisions in Polish society. As this analysis will demonstrate, the major political cleavages in Poland display important continuities from the past, and appear to be quite similar to those found elsewhere in central and eastern Europe: urban-rural differences, the political needs of the peasantry, the peculiar characteristics of the industrial class, ultra-nationalism, and the persistence of the reconstructed Communist Party. These conflicts in turn have been reflected in various partisan formations and electoral coalitions.

In contrast to Romania, the noncommunist opposition in Poland was able to fashion a broad-based organizational challenge in advance of free elections. Solidarity emerged under the old system and had aspirations to continuing its role as a "catchall" aggregator of the Polish vote. However, like most umbrella formations, divisions occurred over personalities and programs. Solidarity is already badly divided, and voter loyalty may dissolve even further as other deep-seated traditions (e.g., nationalism, religious sentiment) or newer issues emerge.

The 1990 presidential election in Poland was a defining political event. It aroused the electorate, brought latent political issues to the surface, and helped establish electoral bases for the major political cleavages in post-Communist Poland. Virtually all of the current major electoral cleavages in Poland can be traced back to political manifestations which were first expressed in the 1990 presidential election.

Six candidates qualified for the First round of the two-Ballot presidential race in November 1990: Lech Walesa (Solidarity), Tadeusz Masowiecki (centerliberal groups), Roman Bartoszcze (Polish Peasant Party), Leszek Moczulski (anti-Communist, nationalist right), Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz (reconstructed Communist Party), and Stanislaw Tyminski (independent). Several candidates representing various fringe groups were unable to generate the required 100,000 signatures suggesting they were either unpopular or their programs had little mass support.

By far the most interesting candidate was Tyminski whose shadowy background as an outsider and a self-made millionaire coupled with his effective use of the media generated considerable political interest among a

newly-aroused electorate. Unlike the other candidates, Tyminski had no ties to established political groups in Poland, and was untainted by recent political history. His antiestablishment message found considerable support among the disenchanted and confused electorate.

The geography of post-Communist elections in Poland reveals a number of interesting patterns, including some that reflect important historical divisions associated with the various partitions of the country. Our analysis is based an the aggregate distribution of the vote across 49 voivodships.[3] As expected, Walesa became the leading candidate in 1990, although not without challenge. Surprisingly, Tyminski took the lead in four voivodships (Katowice, Leszno, Olsztyn, Pila) an the first ballot. While Tyminski's core support was scattered and non-contiguous, Walesa's lead over Tyminski was greater than 10 percent in the eastern voivodships, but dropped to 10 percent or less in the West of Poland.

The Walesa-Masowiecki contest also displayed distinct geographical patterns, especially in the contiguous nature of their respective electoral bases. With the exception of Warsaw (25%) and Lodz (20%), Masowiecki's base of support (over 16% of the vote) was confined to the region of western Poland. His support declined as one moved east. With the exception of Gdansk, Walesa's base formed a narrow region in eastern Poland.

The electoral geography of the minor candidates is also worth noting. Bartoszcze was the candidate of the Peasant Party and, as expected, he did well in the agricultural regions, especially in southeastern Poland. With the exception of Pila, his base of support was also fairly contiguous. Electoral support for the reconstructed Communist candidate Cimoszewicz was spread around Poland most likely due to the geographically diffuse nomenklatura of the old regime. With few exceptions (e.g., Gdansk and Kielce), his base of support tended to form an inverted U-shape running from east to north to west across Poland.

The geography of support for the presidential candidates appeared to be sensitive to both political traditions and to one or more key socioeconomic indicators - a relationship which provides us with some insight into the probable nature of their respective electoral bases. One crucial political variable we might label "Solidarity Traditions" - a characteristic of those regions in which Solidarity union support has been persistently strong over the years. A crude indicator of this variable is support for Solidarity candidates in the free Senate election of June 1989 as measured by the average Solidarity vote in

[3] The ecological information for Poland consists of subnational political and socioeconomic data measured at the voivodship and election district levels. Poland is divided into 49 voivodships including the 3 urban districts of Warsaw, Krakow, and Lodz. Data sources for Poland include Maty Rocznik Statystyczny (Glowny Urzad Statystyczny, various issues); Monitor Polski Nr. 50; and various issues of Rzeczpospolita. I am indebted to Dr. Krzysztof Jasiewicz for supplying detailed regional breakdowns of the Polish vote.

each voivodship for that election. In those regions where “Solidarity Traditions” were strong, Walesa's first ballot lead over Tyminski improved dramatically (r = +.70) and Tyminski's electoral support declined (r = -.48). Support for Cimoszewicz was also weak in areas of strong "Solidarity Traditions" (r = -.59) - the only deviant case being Bialystok which was Cimoszewicz's home region.

The urban-rural or developmental cleavage appears if we examine levels of urbanization and development across the voivodships in relation to electoral support for both Masowiecki and Bartoszcze. The stark regional differences between the bases of the liberal-center and peasant interests can be seen in the correlations reported in Table 3. Using standard socioeconomic indicators, the correlations suggest that party space in the rural agricultural areas is already being occupied by a strong established Peasant Party. The correlations also indicate the difficulty of any liberal expansion beyond their base of support in developed Poland.

As noted in the case of Romania, this cleavage appears to be a fundamental one in central and eastern Europe, and it is likely to be a persistent factor in future electoral contests. Clearly there are differential political and economic needs in the urban and rural environments and we would expect to find them manifested in the structuring Poland's emergent party system. Similar to Romania, we find that electoral support for liberal values, policies and candidates is largely an urban phenomenon, whereas the rural areas appear to be more conservative, and somewhat skeptical of major change.

One measure of media effects on the campaign can be found in support for Masowiecki and communication indicators such as newspaper sales per capita (r = +.87) and the number of television subscribers (r = +.71). The correlations are quite high in a positive direction. Masowiecki did best in areas of high media density, suggesting considerable support from urban and intellectual classes.

The geography of Tyminski's electoral support reflects a deepening division between developed and backward Poland, and explains to some degree why he emerged as the protest candidate. Although the correlations were moderate in magnitude, Tyminski's support tended to be highest in areas of "backward" Poland as measured by standard development indicators (urbanization, telephones per capita, physicians per capita, newspaper sales, etc.). His support was strongest in small and medium-size towns (Jasiewicz, 1992c, p. 191). Tyminski appeared to benefit from television exposure. This would seem to be a perfect strategy for a protest candidate - directed appeals to the disenchanted through the controlled images of television.

The second ballot produced a surprise run-off between Walesa and Tyminski. While Walesa won overwhelming with 74.2 percent compared to Tyminski’s 25.7 percent, his victory was less spectacular considering that a little over half of the eligible voters participated in the run-off election. Walesa's actual

Table 3:
SELECTED CORRELATES OF THE 1990 POLISH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (N = 49 voivodships)

Variable*	T. Masowiecki (liberal-center)	R. Bartoszcze (Peasant Party)
TV subscribers per 1000 inhabitants	.71	-.60
Telephones per 1000 inhabitants	.58	-.53
Newspaper and periodical sales per capita	.87	-.73
Physicians per 10,000 inhabitants	.50	-.56
Hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants	.62	-.62
Railway track per 100 square kilometers	.81	-.62
Population density	.40	-.49
Percent urban population	.81	-.81

* Based on 1988 data.

support amounted to a modest 38.4 percent of the total electorate. lf we consider gains in support between the two ballots, there is some evidence an the basis of correlations that the Masowiecki (r = +.90) and Moczulski (r = +.47) electorates shifted their support to Walesa in the run-off. Supporters of Bartoszcze (r = +.48) and Cimoszewicz (r = +.75) appeared to have shifted to Tyminski. Tyminski's gain between the two ballots averaged 4.5 percentage points. The area of greatest gain (17.8 points) was in Bialystok - the core area of support for Cimoszewicz an the first ballot. However, Tyminski's second ballot support did not extend beyond the original base of underdeveloped Poland, and he lost some of the more developed areas such as Katowice. Although viewed as something of a "flash" phenomenon, the protest electorate as represented by the Tyminski-Communist support pattern is likely to continue as a major unpredictable factor in Polish politics. One of his strongest group of supporters was the 18 to 25 age cohort (Jasiewicz, 1992c, p. 192).

The legislative elections of 1991 produced a fragmented and ineffective parliament due to extremely liberal rules of representation. The legislative elections of September 1993 were conducted under more conservative rules which penalized fragmentation and encouraged coalition-building. The 1993 election produced three important results: (1) a simplification of the Polish party system in terms of representation, (2) a strengthening of the left (Alliance of the Democratic Left [SLD] and the Polish Peasant Party [PSL]), and (3) an increase in the politicization of socioeconomic differences as reflected in electoral support for the major parties. The key variables continue to be urban-rural differences, variations in the level of economic development across Poland, the conflict between beneficiaries and losers from reform, and the geography of unemployment.

Once again, by examining the geographical relationship between voter support for the elections of 1990 (presidential), 1991 and 1993 (legislative), and various socioeconomic indicators measured at the voivodship level, we gain considerable insight into the dynamics of mass politics in contemporary Poland. There is a minor problem of comparability across elections. The 1990 presidential election was conducted using the 49 voivodships; the 1991 election was based an 37 redrawn election districts involving various aggregations of voivodships; the 1993 legislative election returned to the voivodship as the basic electoral unit but subdivided Warsaw (2) and Katowice (3) for a total of 52 districts. Fitting the data to the various aggregations, however, has not resulted in any major distortions of the results.

There is now abundance empirical evidence confirming that the dominant parties (SLD, PSL, and Democratic Union [UD]) have established geographical bases across Poland as a result of three major post-Communist elections. We have focused on the correlates of the 1993 vote for these three parties in Table 4. The geographical core of the SDL was already apparent in the presidential election of 1990. There is a strong relationship between the SLD vote in 1993

Table 4:
SELECTED CORRELATES OF THE 1993 SEJM ELECTION: THE SLD, PSL and UD VOTE* (N = 49 voivodships)

Variable	SLD 1993	PSL 1993	UD 1993
Walesa (second ballot, 1990)	-.66	--	.40
Tyminski (second ballot, 1990)	.66	--	-.40
Tyminski's gain between ballots, 1990	.54	--	-.35
Walesa's gain between ballots, 1990	--	--	.84
Cimoszewicz (first ballot, 1990)	.68	--	--
Bartoszcze (first ballot, 1990)	--	.85	-.66
Masowiecki (first ballot, 1990)	.33	-.80	.87
Unemployment (May 1993)	.44	--	-.30
Development index**	.37	-.76	.71
Economic Health Index	--	-.32	.55

* Only correlations above +.30 are reported.

** The Development Index is based on a factor analysis of the socioeconomic variables listed in Table 3. The data are for the late 1980s.

*** The Economic Health Index is based on a ranking of voivodships in 1991 taking into consideration unemployment and compensation.

and first ballot support for Cimoszewicz, the Communist candidate, in 1990 (r = +.68). This relationship not only continues to hold but was strengthened between 1991 and 1993. The correlation between the SLD vote in 1991 and 1993 is quite high (r = +.83). It is interesting to note that Cimoszewicz only received 9.2 percent (1.5 million votes) in 1990 compared to the 2.8 million votes received by the SLD in 1993. The growing strength of the SDL is likely to be felt in the next presidential election.

There is also evidence that the SLD vote captured a good portion of the Tyminski electorate and has come to represent geographical pockets of long-term discontent in Poland. For example, if we consider Tyminski's 1990 presidential support as a major indicator of protest and discontent among the Polish electorate, we note a significant positive correlation between his second ballot support and votes for the SLD in 1993 (r = +.66). Perhaps even more convincing is the positive relationship (r = +.54) involving Tyminski's percentage point gain between the two presidential ballots in 1990 and the electoral geography of the SLD in 1993.

Support for the SLD was also stronger in the urbanized areas of western Poland, although some areas of eastern Poland (e.g., Bialystok and Chelm) also manifested high levels of support. Short term economic protest also appears to be an important component of the SLD electoral base. There is also overlap between the geography of unemployment (May 1993) and the SLD vote in 1993 (r = +.44).

The geography of the SLD vote in 1993 suggests the possibility of a more complex explanatory model which might be used to characterize fundamental components of SLD support. We can conceptualize the model as having three basic components: (1) electoral traditions (measured in terms of previous electoral support), (2) economic discontent (measured by the unemployment rate), and voter turnout (controlling for variations in electoral participation). The following regression model was derived using the above variables as predictors of the SLD vote in 1993:

$$\text{SLD (1993)} = -.81 + 1.15(\text{SLD 1991}) + .26(\text{V}) + .10(\text{U})$$
$$R = .92 \quad R^2 = .85$$

Where:

SLD (1993) = Percent SLD vote in 1993
SLD (1991) = Percent SLD vote 1991
V = Percent voter turnout (1993)
U = Percent unemployment (May 1993)

Using the technique of regression analysis, we find the model to be highly efficient in that 85 percent of the geographical variation in the 1993 SLD vote can be accounted for by these three variables. In fact, previous SLD voting and unemployment together account for nearly 75 percent of the variation in the 1993 SLD vote. One could also substitute Tyminski's support in 1990 for

previous left voting (SLD 1991) in the above equation and still arrive at approximately the saure amount of explanatory variance. The regression model does mask the individual contributions of the variables. If wo begin wich unemployment (U), the multiple correlation (R) is .44. If wo then add previous voting for the SLD in 1991, the multiple correlation increases to .86. In the equation above, the effects of unemployment (U) are somewhat lessened because of its apparent relationship with core areas of SLD support (i.e., SLD vote in 1991).

The Polish Peasant Party (PSL), which received 15.4 percent of the vote in 1993, became the second-ranked dominant party in the Polish Sejm. The bases of PSL support are highly regionalized in the rural areas of central and western Poland. Similar to the SLD, support for the PSL has been built up around an electoral base First manifested in 1990 with the presidential candidacy of Roman Bartoszcze. The 1993 PSL vote was highly correlated with Bartoszcze's 1990 vote (r = +.86), and with the PSL vote in 1991 (r = +.70).

As expected, support for the PSL in 1993 was negatively related to indicators of industrial development (r = -.77) and urbanization (r = -.82). There is also some evidence based an unreported correlations that areas of PSL support are characterized by the presence of older populations as reflected in higher death rates, as well as those which have experienced population losses through out-migration as a result of economic decline.

The liberal Democratic Union (UD) is the third-ranked party in the Sejm receiving 10.6 percent of the vote in 1993. The electoral geography of the UD suggests it is located largely in northwestern and southwestern Poland with a few pockets of strength in the Center. The UD appears to have difficulty in both defining and holding an to its electoral base. The most significant political correlation was between the 1993 UD vote and Walesa's percentage point gain between the two ballots in the 1990 presidential election (r = +.84). The correlation of UD support with voter turnout was also mildly positive (r = +.46).

In socioeconomic terms, the UD appears to reflect an urban-industrial electorate where higher levels of economic well-being and the benefits of reform are likely to be felt. The following correlations with the 1993 UD vote tend to support this view: urbanization (r = +.80), industrial development (r = +.76), unemployment (r = -.30), rate of growth of privatization (r = +.35), and the rate of in-migration (r = +.33).

Minor parties such as the nationalist Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) also appear to have established regional bases of support. The geography of the KPN is highly regionalized in southeastern Poland and the western district of Szczecin. The KPN with 5.8 percent of the vote and 22 seats in 1993 did much better than its 1990 presidential candidate Leszek Moczulski who garnered only 2.5 percent. The correlation between Moczulski's support in 1990 and the 1993 KPN vote was significant (r = +.67).

The evidence derived from an examination of Poland's electoral geography suggests that partisan differences are beginning to take shape, indeed solidify around distinct bases of support in Polish society. A degree of "freezing" of the party system is in evidence with regard to the major formations. The major parties appear to be highly regionalized reflecting the needs and interests of various cultural, ideological, and socioeconomic strata in Polish society. Even the centrist groups which have exhibited more electoral volatility appear to conform to this pattern. Virtually all of the current electoral divisions in Poland can be traced back to the political manifestations which emerged in the defining 1990 presidential election. The major parties have not only continue to build on this initial base of support, but in some cases have also reached back into Polish history.

Conclusion

Our purpose in this article has been to examine emerging trends in mass politics of the new democracies of central and eastern Europe as they enter the post-Communist period. We have singled out Poland and Romania as case studies in order to document what appear to be fundamental empirical relationships between societal divisions and the vote, as manifested in the First democratic elections in over forty years. While we have observed significant continuities in political identification and voter support of a functional nature, the territorial dimension of regionalism and ethnicity also have played a decisive role decisive role, followed by sharp differences over the policies of economic reform. In both countries, the structuring of mass politics has already taken place around these basic divisions. Their durability will be tested in future electoral contests.

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